



Police Target Drug Crime During National Effort

Over 200 arrested in statewide sweep

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Livonia. As part of a national cooperative effort to increase drug trafficking interdiction and highlight the effectiveness of federal grant funding in combating drug crime, officers from the Michigan State Police (MSP) participated in a week-long enforcement sweep with officers from county and local agencies.

Between April 23 and 29, Michigan officers conducted 54 search warrants, arrested 211 individuals, and seized 763 pounds of marijuana. Officers also seized various other drugs including cocaine, heroin, ecstasy and methamphetamine. The estimated street value of the seized drugs is over \$810,000.

"Cooperation among different agencies at the federal, state and local levels is one of the most effective ways to combat drug crime," said Colonel Peter C. Munoz, director of the Michigan State Police. "With the support of federal funding, police agencies can continue these efforts even in tight budget times."

During the effort, known as Operation Byrne Drugs, officers located and dismantled four marijuana growing operations and five methamphetamine laboratories. Other seized items include 23 guns, five vehicles, computers and over \$47,000 in cash.

One of the investigations initiated under Operation Byrne Drugs involved a multi-state drug trafficking ring posing as a commercial tourist bus. Michigan officers conducted surveillance on the suspects and shared information with law enforcement agencies in other states along the bus route. Based on this information, a traffic stop was conducted on the bus in Tucson, Ariz. and \$1.5 million in cash was seized.

"I am happy to join with our law enforcement partners in celebrating the operation's victory in disrupting the flow of illegal drugs into Michigan and in acknowledging the important role of Michigan in assisting other states in their law enforcement efforts," said Don Allen, director of the State Office of Drug Control Policy. "Operation Byrne Drugs is a success and I believe that we can build on that success in the near future to both continue to make significant disruptions in illegal activities and to safeguard our citizens. These efforts demonstrate the importance of collaborative efforts and the Office of Drug Control Policy looks forward to the opportunity to continue these types of cooperative efforts."

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All 22 of the MSP's multijurisdictional teams participated in the effort. The teams are made up of state, county and local officers whose duties include drug enforcement. MSP motor carrier officers and Hometown Security Teams as well as state, county and local canine teams also participated in the operation.

Operation Byrne Drugs was organized by the National Alliance of State Drug Enforcement Agencies (NASDEA) to demonstrate the vital role federal funding plays in fighting drug crime. Federal Byrne grants help state and local agencies create multijurisdictional teams by offsetting the cost for each department to have its own team.

Federal Byrne grants are named in honor of New York City Police Department Officer Edward Byrne. Byrne was fatally shot by drug traffickers in 1998, while on assignment protecting a witness in a drug case.

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